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| Date last reviewed: 10th October 2017 | Date last amended: 10th October 2017 |

**LOADING AND UNLOADING PASSENGERS**

This policy applies only to minibuses with more than 8 passenger seat capacity

**Parking the vehicle**

Passengers must be loaded and unloaded in a safe manner which protects themselves, staff and members of the public. In order to do this staff must adhere to the following procedure:

* The driver must pull up in a safe area where passengers must board on the kerb side of the vehicle only. Passengers must never be allowed to enter or exit the vehicle on the road side.
* When loading and unloading passengers it is the driver’s responsibility to open and close the passenger door only from the outside of the vehicle. Escorts must not operate the door for any reason other than for emergency situations.

**Seating configuration**

Seating configurations must be done so with one escort at the rear of the vehicle whilst the other remains at the front of the vehicle closest to the passenger door.

**Loading and unloading passengers**

The escort situated by the passenger door must assist the driver by managing the loading and unloading of passengers by guarding the passenger door whilst the driver opens it from the outside. The other escort must remain in the vehicle to assist with remaining passengers on board.

The driver may only open the door when he/she has been given the thumbs up gesture from the escort to say that it is safe to open the doors.

No unauthorised passengers may travel, only passengers on the schedule. Parents/carers, teachers or friends of the children or any other individual must NEVER travel on the vehicle without prior notification from the bus operator manager.

**Pick up points**

In the event that the normal pickup location is unsafe for loading or unloading of passengers then the vehicle may need to relocate to the nearest possible location near the drop off destination.

**Staff and passenger safety**

Only the driver can operate the passenger doors and tail lift. The escort must NEVER operate these other than in emergency situations.

All staff must wear high visibility jackets at all times proved to them by the bus operator.

All staff must wear their appropriate identification badge at all times.

It is the escort’s responsibility to ensure passengers remain seated and wear their seatbelts and remain seated at all times for the entire length of the journey. Should a passenger disengage their seatbelt they must tell the driver to stop immediately so this may be dealt with. The driver must not continue with the journey until the escort has informed them that the seatbelt has been securely fastened and it is safe to travel.

All staff must be seated at all times with their seatbelts securely fastened while the vehicle is in motion.

All staff must carry a mobile telephone with them at all times so that the bus operator can contact them at all times. Phones are strictly to be used for communication with management only and not for personal use whilst working with children.